

Youth Tips

The Children's Mental Health Waiver Program wants to afford youth every opportunity to be involved in their service planning and for their voices to be heard.

Please follow these tips, provided by Nikki Brown, to support the youth in their participation and decision-making.

- Before each meeting, talk to the youth about what is going to be talked about in the meeting so the youth can feel more comfortable and involved.
- Greet the youth when they come in and thank them for coming.
- Make sure that everyone introduces themselves at the beginning of each meeting.
- Recognize and be aware of the youth culture and be respectful.
 - Make sure you address the youth how they want to be addressed.
- Encourage the youth to talk at the meetings.
 - o Encourage the youth in making their own decision.
 - o Acknowledge the youth when they are talking or asking questions.
- Let the youth make suggestions and if it doesn't work, explain to the youth why.
- Don't criticize the youth about their mistake or talk down to the youth.
- It is important to the youth that their ideas and participation is appreciated.
- Have a positive attitude with the youth.
- Make sure others give youth the chance to share their ideas and feelings.
- Don't interrupt the youth when they are talking.
- Don't' give the youth any looks that would make them feel unwelcome.
 - Don't stare at the youth when someone is talking, because the youth might feel intimidated or that they are not welcome at the meeting when this occurs.
- Make sure you use terms youth can understand and don't use acronyms.
- Schedule meetings at times when youth can attend.
- Have an evaluation form for the youth to fill out when the meeting is done.